



# United States Department of the Interior

## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

101 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 236

Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-6267

(907) 456-0250



October 5, 2010

Dear Interested Party:

The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), is completing a Wild and Scenic River (WSR) review as part of the revised Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires that such a study be completed whenever Federal agencies revise their land use plans. This multi-step process includes **eligibility** review, **suitability** analysis, and potential Congressional **designation**.

This month the Arctic Refuge completed the **eligibility** report which can be found at <http://arctic.fws.gov/ccp.htm>. The report details which rivers and river systems on FWS lands within the Refuge meet the criteria to be eligible for designation. The eligibility phase of the study is solely an inventory designed to identify outstanding river-related values (ORVs) (which are defined in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act) and does not examine competing uses for the identified rivers and river systems. A summary of this report, list of eligible rivers, and associated outstanding river-related values is attached.

The FWS is now beginning the next phase of the WSR review. The **suitability** analysis is the process of determining whether each segment identified as eligible would be a worthy addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. During the initial stage of the suitability process, the FWS is considering a number of suitability criteria such as manageability of each segment, land ownership, use tradeoffs and conflicts, usage levels, and availability of other methods for protecting values, to name a few.

At this time, the FWS is soliciting data from interested stakeholders and partners for each of the eligible rivers. The most helpful data is information that directly addresses the suitability criteria. The FWS will then use these data in making draft suitability determinations during the alternatives analysis for the Draft CCP/EIS. **Please send us your comments regarding the eligible rivers of interest to you by November 12, 2010.** When the Draft CCP/ EIS is published (tentatively scheduled for spring of 2011), the public will have 90-days to comment on the draft suitability determinations.

If you have any questions, please contact Sharon Seim at (907) 456-0501 or e-mail them to [ArcticRefugeCCP@fws.gov](mailto:ArcticRefugeCCP@fws.gov).

Sincerely,

Richard Voss  
Refuge Manager

Enclosures:

Summary of Eligibility Report, List of Eligible Rivers;  
Comment Request Form